

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE
05.08.2020

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: (1) **Application No:** 20/00674/FUL **Page No.** 33-60

Site: Land To The South East, Mortimer Station, Station Road, Mortimer

Planning Officer Presenting: Lydia Mather

Member Presenting: N/A

Written submissions

Parish Council: Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Objector(s): Mr and Mrs Clatworthy

Supporter(s): Great Western Railway

Applicant/Agent: Pro Vision

Ward Member(s) speaking: Cllr Graham Bridgman
Cllr Geoffrey Mayes

1. Additional Consultation Responses

Public representations:	A letter of support from the landowner; 1 letter of support from a resident; 1 letter of objection from a resident; A letter from the applicant's agent.
Matters raised:	From the landowner: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Englefield Estate support the application who own the land and have worked closely with the applicant and Great Western Railway to enter into a long-term lease for delivery and future management of the car park for the much needed community facility;• Englefield Estate are aware that landscaping planting on the submitted plans is shown to the south of the proposed car park outside of the application red line. This land is also owned by Englefield Estate and its management would be included in the lease arrangements for the car park;• A Grampian condition had been expected to secure the

landscaping and the agent to the application considers this consistent with national planning practice guidance. Such a condition was envisaged to prohibit the development being brought into use until the landscaping had been completed with the specification and management to be agreed with the Council.

Resident letter of support:

- The lack of parking at the station results in many local residents using their own car rather than public transport;
- Residents park along the road on The Street, if they can find a space, sometimes unsafely;
- Extending the car park would be a strong benefit for the whole community and Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council have worked in partnership with the community and the proposal is welcomed by many village residents.

Resident letter of objection:

- They support the need for meaningful additional parking at Mortimer Station by extending the existing car park on the northern side of the station, not the site of this and the previous application to the south side of the station which is on productive agricultural land and outside the village envelope;
- An improved sustainable network of bus travel is needed linking railway stations including Green Park and if it goes ahead Grazeley to join local villages and communities. This requires serious joined up thinking not by a local parish council, but by local authorities in West Berkshire, Wokingham, Hampshire, and Reading;
- This is also the case for local and wider infrastructure for pedestrian and cycle routes being promoted by Government to join up villages and communities to reduce the overall carbon footprint. A fresh look at the master planning of all forms of non-motor vehicular transport is needed and the fear is it is not been undertaken and an opportunity is lost;
- The road safety aspect of this application is a disaster waiting to happen. Perhaps this is the time to be pushing to have local speed limits reduced on the network of country roads along with designated HGV routes.

From the agent:

- A Grampian condition is suitable in this instance to secure the landscaping;
- Ideally a footway would be designed with a 5% (1:20) gradient, but a slope of 8% (1:12) may be used. The proposed footway follows the existing terrain of the road. Where gradients on the proposed footway exceed 5% these are short sections and are on average around 8%;
- 125mm kerbing to the proposed footway over the bridge could be provided;
- Updated drainage strategy will be submitted;
- The footway access into the existing Mortimer station access will not reduce carriageway width. Plan using detailed topographical survey is submitted.

2. Consideration of Additional Responses

- 2.1 With regard to the landscaping outside of the red line whilst it is acknowledged the landowner is the same as for the application site it is not considered a Grampian condition would be appropriate. These are negatively worded conditions requiring works outside of the site to be undertaken either before development or before a development is brought into use. Such conditions would not allow the Council to ensure that any dead trees/vegetation is replaced within 5 years. Nor would the Council be a party of the lease between the landowner and the operator of the car park to enforce any such replacement or management of the landscaping. As this landscaping is identified as required as mitigation for the development it is not considered that a Grampian condition can ensure the mitigation over time. A landscaping condition within a red line can include these requirements and be enforceable.
- 2.2 It is agreed that an extension to the existing car parking at Mortimer Station is supported in policy but no preferred location or level of parking is stated. The concern of Officers, aside from the landscape impact, is that the level of car parking is not justified. Not because there is no demand, but because the exact level of demand is not considered to be established by the documents submitted with the application to justify 150 spaces. This a particularly relevant issue at the moment given that the Council recently declared a climate emergency and that the widespread view that as a result of the Covid crisis there is likely to be a significant and permanent shift towards more working from home and less commuting.
- 2.3 The updated drainage strategy has been passed to the Council's drainage officers to consider and may address that reason for refusal. It is requested that if such a response is received that the recommendation include delegation to officers to remove that reasons for refusal as overcome.
- 2.4 Matters raised on the need for joint working on infrastructure provision for non-car transport modes are understood but cannot be addressed via this application which needs to be considered on its own merits. Highways will update Committee directly at the meeting.

3. Updated Recommendation

The recommendation remains as set out in the agenda committee report, subject to the inclusion that should the Council's drainage engineers confirm the amended drainage strategy is acceptable that it be delegated to Officer's to remove that reason for refusal.